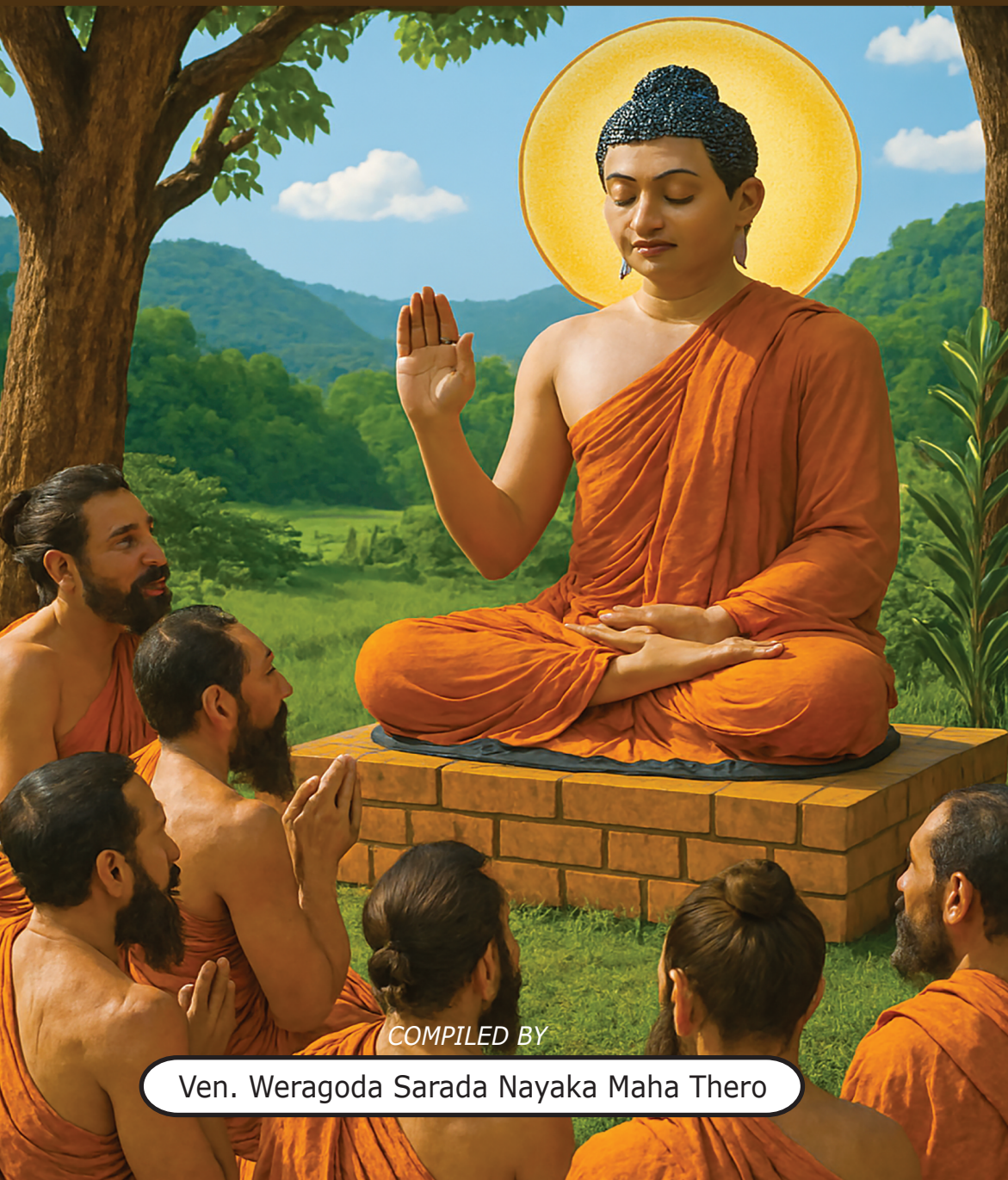
KĀLĀMA (KESAPUTTA) SUTTA



COMPILED BY

Ven. Weragoda Sarada Nayaka Maha Thero

KĀLĀMA (KESAPUTTA) SUTTA

Compiled by
Ven. Weragoda Sarada Nayaka Maha Thero

Singapore Buddhist Meditation Centre,
No. 1, Jalan Mas Puteh
Singapore 128607
Tel: +65 67783330, + 65 94656570
Email: weragodas1941@gmail.com

“Sabba Dānaṃ Dhamma Dānaṃ Jināti”
“The Gift of Truth Excels all Other Gifts”

This book “Kālāma Sutta (Kesaputta) Sutta”
is sponsor by
Hoh Jiun Yuen
in loving memory of
Late father Mr. Hoh Ah Kew,
Late mother-in-law Mdm. Aw Mooi Kee
and
Late father-in-law Mr. Chua Chin Ai

May they attain the Bliss of Nibbana.

May the Blessings of the Noble Triple Gem be showering good health, happiness and prosperity upon Hoh Jiun Yuen and family.

Ven. Weragoda Sarada Nayaka Maha Thero
20.03.2026

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammā Sambuddhassa

KĀLĀMA (KESAPUTTA) SUTTA

Evaṃ me sutaṃ—
Ekaṃ samayaṃ Bhagavā Kosalesu cārikaṃ caramāno mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena saddhiṃ yena Kesaputtaṃ nāma Kālāmānaṃ nigamo tadavasari. Assosuṃ kho Kesaputtiyā Kālāmā: 'samaṇo khalu, bho, Gotamo Sakyaputto Sakyakulā pabbajito Kesaputtaṃ anuppatto'. Taṃ kho pana Bhavantaṃ Gotamaṃ evaṃ kalyāṇo kittisaddo abbhuggato: 'iti pi so Bhagavā arahaṃ sammā sambuddho vijjā caraṇa sampanno sugato lokavidū anuttaro purisa dammasārathī satthā devamanussānaṃ Buddho Bhagavā'ti, "sādhu kho pana tathārūpānaṃ arahataṃ dassanaṃ hotī"'ti.

I heard thus, when on a certain occasion the Blessed One was journeying with a great number of the order

of monks through parts of Kosala, he arrived at Kesaputta, a market town of the Kālāma people.

And the Kālāmas of Kesaputta heard: Truly the venerable Gotama, son of the Sākyas, who went forth from the Sākya Clan, has come to Kesaputta; concerning Gotama the Blessed One the auspicious sound of fame has risen high, 'The blessed one is an Arhat, fully enlightened, endowed with knowledge and practice, a world-knower, peerless, a guide of men capable of being trained, a teacher of deities and humans, enlightened, and blessed.' "It is indeed worthwhile seeing such Arahants."

Atha kho kesaputtiyā Kālāmā yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkamiṃsu; upasaṅkamitvā appekacce Bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdiṃsu, appekacce Bhagavatā saddhiṃ sammodiṃsu, sammodanīyaṃ kathaṃ sāraṇīyaṃ vītisāretvā ekamantaṃ nisīdiṃsu, appekacce yena Bhagavā tenañjaliṃ paṇāmetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdiṃsu, appekacce nāmagottaṃ sāvetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdiṃsu, appekacce tuṇhībhūtā ekamantaṃ nisīdiṃsu. Ekamantaṃ nisinnā kho te Kesaputtiyā Kālāmā Bhagavantaṃ etadavocuṃ:

Then the Kālāmas of Kesaputta went up to the place in which the Blessed One was, and on arriving there some saluted the Blessed One reverentially, and sat at a side; some exchanged cordial greetings with him, and sat at a side; some raised their joined palms towards him respectfully, and sat at a side; some announced their name and their clan, and sat at a side; some sat at a side silently. And the Kālāmas of Kesaputta sitting at a side, said to the Blessed One:

“Santi, bhante, eke samaṇabrāhmaṇā kesaputtaṃ āgacchanti. Te sakaṃ yeva vādaṃ dīpenti jotenti, parappavādaṃ pana khuṃsenti vambhenti paribhavanti opapakkhiṃ karonti. Aparepi, bhante, eke samaṇabrāhmaṇā kesaputtaṃ āgacchanti. Te pi sakaṃ yeva vādaṃ dīpenti jotenti, parappavādaṃ pana khuṃsenti vambhenti paribhavanti opapakkhiṃ karonti. Tesaṃ no, bhante, amhākaṃ hot’eva kaṅkhā hoti vicikicchā: ‘ko su nāma imesaṃ bhavataṃ samaṇabrāhmānaṃ saccaṃ āha, ko musā’”ti?

“Venerable sir, certain ascetics and brahmins who visit Kesaputta praise, glorify, their own doctrine and

disparage, despise, revile, and pull to pieces, the doctrine of others; certain other ascetics, too, who visit Kesaputta praise, glorify, their own doctrine, and disparage, despise, revile, and pull to pieces, the doctrine of others. Concerning them, venerable sir, we are in doubt, we are uncertain, of these Venerable Ones, who speak truth and who, untruth?"

"Alañhi vo, kālāmā, kaṅkhituṃ alaṃ vicikicchituṃ. Kaṅkhanīye va pana vo ṭhāne vicikicchā uppannā". "Etha tumhe, Kālāmā, mā anussavena, mā paramparāya, mā itikirāya, mā piṭakasampadānena, mā takkahetu, mā nayahetu, mā ākāraparivitakkena, mā diṭṭhinijjhānakkhantiyā, mā bhabbarūpatāya, mā samaṇo no garūti. Yadā tumhe, Kālāmā, attanā va jāneyyātha: 'ime dhammā akusalā, ime dhammā sāvajjā, ime dhammā viññugarahitā, ime dhammā samattā samādinnā ahitāya dukkhāya saṃvattantī'"ti, atha tumhe, Kālāmā, pajaheyyātha.

"It is proper for you, Kālāmas, to doubt, to be uncertain: uncertainty has arisen in you about what is

doubtful. Come, Kālāmas. Do not go upon report; do not go upon tradition; do not go upon hearsay; do not go upon correspondence with scriptures; do not go upon cogitation; do not go upon logic; do not go upon specious reasoning; do not go upon approval of a thought-over notion; do not go upon a person's seeming ability; do not go upon the thought, 'the ascetic is our teacher'. Kālāmas, when you yourselves know: 'These things are bad; these things are blamable; these things are censured by the wise; undertaken and observed, these things lead to harm, ill', abandon them."

"Taṃ kiṃ maññatha, Kālāmā, lobho purisassa ajjhattaṃ uppajjamāno uppajjati hitāya vā ahitāya vā"ti?"

"What do you think, Kālāmas? Does greed appear in a man for his benefit or harm?"

"Ahitāya bhante".

"For his harm, Venerable sir."

"Luddho panāyaṃ, Kālāmā, purisapuggalo lobhena abhibhūto pariyādinnacitto pāṇampi hanti, adinnampi ādiyati, paradārampi gacchati, musāpi bhaṇati, parampi tathattāya

samādapeti, yaṃ sa hoti dīgharattaṃ ahitāya dukkhāyā”ti.

“Kālāmas, this grasping man, with mind overcome, overwhelmed by greed takes life, steals, commits adultery, and tells lies; he prompts others too to do likewise. Does that suffice for his harm, ill, for a long time?”

“Evaṃ, bhante”.

“Yes, Venerable sir.”

“Taṃ kiṃ maññatha, Kālāmā, doso purisassa ajjhattaṃ uppajjamāno uppajjati hitāya vā ahitāya vā”ti?

“What do you think, Kālāmas? Does hate appear in a man for his benefit or harm?”

“Ahitāya, bhante”.

“For his harm, Venerable sir.”

“Duṭṭho panāyaṃ, Kālāmā, purisapuggalo dosena abhibhūto pariyādinnacitto pāṇampi hanti, adinnampi ādiyati, paradārampi

gacchati, musāpi bhaṇati, parampi tathattāya samādapeti yaṃ sa hoti dīgharattaṃ ahitāya dukkhāyā”ti.

“Kālāmas, this malevolent man, with mind overcome, overwhelmed by hate takes life, steals, commits adultery and tells lies; he prompts others to do likewise. Does that suffice for his harm, ill, for a long time?”

“Evaṃ, bhante”.

“Yes, Venerable sir.”

“Taṃ kiṃ maññatha, Kālāmā, moho purisassa ajjhattaṃ uppajjamāno uppajjati hitāya vā ahitāya vā”ti?”

“What do you think, Kālāmas? Does delusion appear in a man for his benefit or harm?”

“Ahitāya bhante”.

“For his harm, Venerable sir.”

“Mūḷho panāyaṃ, Kālāmā, purisapuggalo mohena abhibhūto pariyādinnacitto pāṇampi

hanti, adinnaṃpi ādiyati, paradārampi gacchati, musāpi bhaṇati, parampi tathattāya samādapeti, yaṃ sa hoti dīgharattaṃ ahitāya dukkhāyā”ti.

“Kālāmas, this muddled man, with mind overcome, overwhelmed with delusion takes life, steals, commits adultery and tells lies; he prompts others too to do likewise. Does that suffice for his harm, ill, for a long time?”

“Evaṃ, bhante”.

“Yes, Venerable sir.”

“Taṃ kiṃ maññatha, Kālāmā, ime dhammā kusalā vā akusalā vā”ti?

“What do you think, Kālāmas? Are these things good or bad?”

“Akusalā, bhante”.

“Bad, Venerable sir.”

“Sāvajjā vā anavajjā vā”ti?

“Blamable or not blamable?”

“Sāvajjā bhante”.

“Blamable, Venerable sir.”

“Viññugarahitā vā viññuppasatthā vā”ti?

“Censured or praised by the wise?”

“Viññugarahitā, bhante”.

“Censured, Venerable sir.”

“Samattā samādinnā ahitāya dukkhāya saṃvattanti, no vā kathaṃ vā ettha hotī”ti?

“Undertaken and observed, do these things lead to harm, ill or not? Or how does it strike you?”

“Samattā, bhante, samādinnā ahitāya dukkhāya saṃvattantī ti. Evaṃ no ettha hotī”ti.

“Undertaken and observed, these things lead to harm, ill. Thus it strikes us.”

“Iti kho, Kālāmā, yaṃ taṃ avocumha ‘etha tumhe, Kālāmā. mā anussavena, mā paramparāya, mā itikirāya, mā piṭakasampadānena, mā takkahetu, mā nayahetu, mā ākāraparivitakkena, mā diṭṭhi nijjhānakkhantiyā, mā bhabbarūpatāya, mā samaṇo no garūti. Yadā tumhe Kālāmā attanā vā jāneyyātha: ‘ime dhammā akusalā, ime dhammā sāvajjā, ime dhammā viññugarahitā, ime dhammā samattā samādinnā ahitāya dukkhāya saṃvattantī ti, atha tumhe, Kālāmā, pajaheyyāthā’ti.” iti yaṃ taṃ vuttaṃ, idametaṃ paṭicca vuttaṃ.

“Therefore, did we say indeed, Kālāmas, what was said thus: Come, Kālāmas. Do not go upon report; do not go upon tradition; do not go upon hearsay; do not go upon correspondence with scriptures; do not go upon cogitation; do not go upon logic; do not go upon specious reasoning; do not go upon approval of a thought-over notion; do not go upon a person’s seeming ability; do not go upon the thought, “The ascetic is our teacher.” Kālāmas, when you yourselves know: “These things are bad; these things are blamable; these things are censured by the wise; undertaken and observed, these things lead to harm, ill,” abandon them.’”

“Etha tumhe, Kālāmā, mā anussavena, mā paramparāya, mā itikirāya, mā piṭaka sampadānena, mā takkahetu, mā nayahetu, mā ākāraparivitakkena,
mā diṭṭhinijjhānakkhantiyā,
mā bhabbarūpatāya, mā samaṇo no garūti. Yadā tumhe, Kālāmā, attanā va jāneyyātha: ‘ime dhammā kusalā, ime dhammā anavajjā, ime dhammā viññuppasatthā, ime dhammā samattā samādinnā hitāya sukhāya saṃvattantī’ti, atha tumhe, Kālāmā, upasampajja vihareyyātha ti.

“Come, Kālāmas. Do not go upon report; do not go upon tradition; do not go upon hearsay; do not go upon correspondence with scripture; do not go upon cogitation; do not go upon logic; do not go upon specious reasoning; do not go upon approval of a thought-over notion; do not go upon a person’s seeming ability; do not go upon the thought, ‘The ascetic is our teacher.’ Kālāmas, when you yourselves know: “These things are good; these things are not blamable; these things are praised by the wise; undertaken and observed, these things lead to benefit, happiness,” enter on and abide in them.

“Taṃ kiṃ maññatha, Kālāmā, alobho purisassa ajjhattaṃ uppajjamāno uppajjati hitāya vā ahitāya vā”ti?”

“What do you think, Kālāmas? Does absence of greed appear in a man for his benefit or harm?”

“Hitāya, bhante”.

“For his benefit, Venerable sir”.

“Aluddho panāyaṃ, Kālāmā, purisapuggalo lobhena anabhibhūto apariyādinnacitto n’eva pāṇaṃ hanti, na adinnaṃ ādiyati, na paradāraṃ gacchati, na musā bhaṇati, na parampi tathattāya samādapeti, yaṃ sa hoti dīgharattaṃ hitāya sukhāyā”ti.

“Kālāmas, this non-grasping man, with mind not overcome, not overwhelmed by greed does not take life, steal, commit adultery, or tell lies; he prompts _ others to do likewise. Does that suffice for his benefit, happiness, for a long time?”

“Evam bhante ti.”

“Yes, Venerable sir.”

“Taṃ kiṃ maññatha, Kālāmā, adoso purisassa ajjhattaṃ uppajjamāno uppajjati hitāya vā ahitāya vā”ti?

What do you think, Kālāmas? Does absence of hate appear in a man, for his benefit or harm?

“Hitāya bhante.”

“For his benefit, Venerable sir.”

“Aduṭṭdho panāyaṃ Kālāmā purisapuggalo dosena anabhibhūto apariyādinnacitto n’eva pāṇaṃ hanti, na adinnaṃ ādiyati, na paradāraṃ gacchati, na musā bhanati na param pi tathattāya samādapeti yaṃ ‘sa hoti dīgharattaṃ hitāya sukhāya”ti?”

“Kālāmas, this non-malevolent man, with mind not overcome, not overwhelmed by hate, does not take life, steal, commit adultery, or tell lies; he prompts others, too, to do likewise. Does that suffice for his benefit, happiness, for a long time?”

“Evaṃ bhante ti.”

“Yes, Venerable sir.”

“Tam kiṃ maññatha Kālāmā, amoho purisassa ajjhattaṃ uppajjamāno uppajjati hitāya vā ahitāya vā”ti?”

“What do you think, Kālāmas? Does absence of delusion arise in a man for his benefit or harm?”

“Hitāya bhante.”

“For his benefit, Venerable sir.”

“Amūḷho panāyaṃ Kālāmā purisapuggalo mohena anabhibhūto apariyādinnacitto n’eva pāṇaṃ hanti na adinnaṃ ādiyati na paradāraṃ gacchati na musā bhanati na param pi tathattāya samādapeti yaṃ sa hoti dīgharattaṃ hitāya sukhāyā’ ti?

“Kālāmas, this non-muddled man, with mind not overcome, not overwhelmed by delusion, does not take life, steal, commit adultery, or tell lies; he prompts others, too, to do likewise. Does that suffice for his benefit, happiness, for a long time?”

“Evaṃ bhante ti.”

“Yes, Venerable sir.”

“Taṃ kiṃ maññatha, kālāmā, ime dhammā kusalā vā akusalā vā”ti?”

“What do you think, Kālāmas? Are these things good or bad?”

“Kusalā, bhante”.

“Good, Venerable sir.”

“Sāvajjā vā anavajjā vā’ti?”

“Blamable or not blamable?”

“Anavajjā, bhante.”

“Not blameable, Venerable sir.”

“Viññugarahitā vā viññuppasatthā vā”ti?”

“Censured or praised by the wise?”

“Viññuppasatthā, bhante”.

“Praised, Venerable sir.”

“Samattā samādinnā hitāya sukhāya saṃvattanti no vā? kathaṃ vā ettha hotī”ti?

“Undertaken and observed, do these things lead to benefit, happiness, or not? Or how does it strike you?”

“Samattā, bhante, samādinnā hitāya sukhāya saṃvattanti. Evaṃ no ettha hotī”ti.

“Undertaken and observed, these things lead to benefit, happiness. Thus, it strikes us.”

“Iti kho, Kālāmā, yaṃ taṃ avocumhā: ‘etha tumhe, Kālāmā. Mā anussavena, mā paramparāya, mā itikirāya, mā piṭakasampadānena, mā takkahetu, mā nayahetu, mā ākāraparivitakkena, mā diṭṭhinijjhānakkhantiyā, mā bhabbarūpatāya, mā samaṇo no garūti. Yadā tumhe, kālāmā, attanā va jāneyyātha—ime dhammā kusalā, ime dhammā anavajjā, ime dhammā viññuppasatthā, ime dhammā samattā samādinnā hitāya sukhāya saṃvattantī’ti, atha tumhe, Kālāmā, upasampajja vihareyyāthā’ti, iti yaṃ taṃ vuttaṃ idametaṃ paṭicca vuttaṃ”.

“Therefore did we say, indeed, Kālāmas, what was said thus: come, Kālāmas. Do not go upon report; do

not go upon tradition; do not go upon hearsay; do not go upon correspondence with scripture; do not go upon cogitation; do not go upon logic; do not go upon specious reasoning; do not go upon approval of a thought-over notion: do not go upon a person's seeming ability; do not go upon the thought, 'The ascetic is our teacher.' Kālāmas, when you yourselves know: 'These things are good, these things are not blamable; these things are praised by the wise; undertaken and observed, these things lead to benefit, happiness', enter on and abide in them."

"Sa kho so, Kālāmā, ariyasāvako evaṃ vigatābhijjho vigatabyāpādo asammūḷho sampajāno patissato mettāsahagatena cetasā ekaṃ disaṃ pharitvā viharati, tathā dutiyaṃ, tathā tatiyaṃ, tathā catutthaṃ, iti uddhamadho tiriyaṃ sabbadhi sabbattatāya sabbāvantaṃ lokaṃ mettāsahagatena cetasā vipulena mahaggatena appamāṇena averena abyāpajjhena pharitvā viharati".

"The noble disciple, Kālāmas, who is this way is devoid of coveting, devoid of ill will, unmuddled, clearly comprehending, and mindful, lives. Having contemplated with thought of friendliness one direction; likewise the second; likewise the third;

likewise the fourth; thus above, below, and through; he lives, having contemplated the entire world, in every case, whole-heartedly, with thought of friendliness, ample, grown great, termless, free from hatred and free from trouble".

"Karuṇāsahagatena cetasā ekaṃ disaṃ pharitvā viharati, tathā dutiyaṃ, tathā tatiyaṃ, tathā catutthaṃ, iti uddhaṃadho tiriyaṃ sabbadhi sabbattatāya sabbāvantaṃ lokaṃ karuṇāsahagatena cetasā vipulena mahaggatena appamāṇena averena abyāpajjhena pharitvā viharati".

"He lives, having contemplated with thought of compassion one direction; likewise the second; likewise the third; likewise the fourth; thus above, below and through; he lives, having contemplated the entire world, in every case, wholeheartedly , with thought of compassion, ample, grown great, termless, free from hatred and free form trouble."

"Muditāsahagatena cetasā ekaṃ disaṃ pharitvā viharati, tathā dutiyaṃ, tathā tatiyaṃ, tathā catutthaṃ, iti uddhaṃadho tiriyaṃ sabbadhi sabbattatāya sabbāvantaṃ lokaṃ muditāsahagatena cetasā vipulena

mahaggatena appamāṇena averena abyāpajjhena pharitvā viharati".

"He lives, having contemplated with thought of gladness one direction; likewise the second; likewise the third; likewise the fourth; thus above, below and through; he lives, having contemplated the entire world, in every case, wholeheartedly, with thought of gladness, ample, grown great, termless, free from hatred, and free from trouble."

"Upekkhāsahagatena cetasā ekaṃ disaṃ pharitvā viharati, tathā dutiyaṃ, tathā tatiyaṃ, tathā catutthaṃ, iti uddhaṃadho tiriyaṃ sabbadhi sabbattatāya sabbāvantaṃ lokaṃ upekkhāsahagatena cetasā vipulena mahaggatena appamāṇena averena abyāpajjhena pharitvā viharati".

"He lives, having contemplated with thought of equability one direction; likewise the second; likewise the third, likewise the fourth; thus above, below, and through; he lives, having contemplated the entire world, in every case, wholeheartedly, with thought of equability, ample, grown great, termless, free from hatred, and free from trouble."

“Sace kho so, Kālāmā, ariyasāvako evaṃ averacitto evaṃ abyāpajjhacitto evaṃ asaṅkiliṭṭhacitto evaṃ visuddhacitto. Tassa diṭṭhe’va dhamme cattāro assāsā adhigatā honti. ‘Sace kho pana atthi paraloko, atthi sukatadukkaṭānaṃ kammānaṃ phalaṃ vipāko, athāhaṃ kāyassa bhedā paraṃ maraṇā sugatiṃ saggaṃ lokaṃ upapajjissāmī’ti, ayam’assa paṭhamo assāso adhigato hoti.”

“The noble disciple, Kālāmas, who has such a hate-free mind, who has such a malice-free mind, who has such an undefiled mind, who has such a purified mind, is one by whom four solaces are found here and now. ‘Suppose there is a hereafter and there is fruit, result, of deeds done well or ill. Then it is possible that I shall be born in the righteous heavenly world.’ This is the first solace found by him.”

‘Sace kho pana natthi paraloko, natthi sukatadukkaṭānaṃ kammānaṃ phalaṃ vipāko, athāhaṃ diṭṭh’eva dhamme averaṃ abyāpajjhaṃ anīghaṃ sukhiṃ attānaṃ pariharāmī’ti, ayam’assa dutiyo assāso adhigato hoti.

“Suppose there is no hereafter and there is no fruit, no result, of deeds done well or ill. Then in this world, here and now, free from hatred, free from trouble, safe and sound, and pleased, I take care of myself.” This is the second solace found by him.

‘Sace kho pana karoto karīyati pāpaṃ, na kho panāhaṃ kassaci pāpaṃ cetemi. Akarontaṃ kho pana maṃ pāpakammaṃ kuto dukkhaṃ phusissatī’ti. ayam’assa tatiyo assāso adhigato hoti.

“Suppose evil befalls the evil-doers. I, however, think of doing evil to none. Then, how can ill affect me who do no evil deed?’ This is the third solace found by him.”

‘Sace kho pana karoto na karīyati pāpaṃ, athāhaṃ ubhayen’eva visuddhaṃ attānaṃ samanupassāmī’ti. ayam’assa catuttho assāso adhigato hoti.

“Suppose evil does not befall the evil-doer. Then, I see myself purified in both ways.” This is the fourth solace found by him.”

“Sa kho so, Kālāmā ariyasāvako, evaṃ avera citto evaṃ abyāpajjha citto evaṃ asaṅkiliṭṭha citto evaṃ visuddha citto tassa diṭṭh’eva dhamme ime cattāro assāsā adhigatā hontī”ti.

“The noble disciple, Kālāmas, who has such a hate-free mind, who has such a malice-free mind, who has such an undefiled mind, who has such a purified mind, is one by whom, here and now, these four solaces are found.”

“Evametaṃ, Bhagavā, eva’metaṃ, Sugata! Sa kho so, bhante, ariyasāvako evaṃ averacitto evaṃ abyāpajjhacitto evaṃ asaṅkiliṭṭhacitto evaṃ visuddhacitto. Tassa diṭṭh’eva dhamme cattāro assāsā adhigatā honti.”

“So it is, Blessed One. So it is, August One, the noble disciple, Venerable Sir, who has such a hate-free mind, who has such a malice-free mind, who has such an undefiled mind, who has such a purified mind, is one by whom, here and now, four solaces are found.”

‘Sace kho pana atthi' paraloko atthi sukatadukkaṭānaṃ kammānaṃ phalaṃ vipāko athāhaṃ kāyassa bhedā param

maraṇā sugatiṃ saggaṃ lokaṃ upapajjissāmī ti, ayamassa paṭhamo assāso adhigato hoti.

"Suppose there is a hereafter and there is fruit, result, of deeds done well or ill. Then it is possible that I shall be born in the righteous heavenly world." This is the first solace found by him."

'Sace kho pana n'atthi paro loko, n'atthi sukatadukkaṭā naṃ kammānaṃ phalaṃ vipāko, athāhaṃ diṭṭh'eva dhamme averaṃ abyāpajjhaṃ anīghaṃ sukhiṃ attānaṃ pariharāmī'ti, ayaṃassa dutiyo assāso adhigato hoti.

"Suppose there is no hereafter and there is no fruit, no result, of deeds done well or ill. Then, in this world, here and now, free from hatred, free from trouble, safe and sound, and pleased, I take care of myself." This is the second solace found by him."

'Sace kho pana karoto karīyati pāpaṃ, na kho panāhaṃ kassaci pāpaṃ cetemi akarontaṃ kho pana maṃ pāpakammaṃ kuto dukkhaṃ phusissatī'ti, ayamassa tatiyo assāso adhigato hoti.

“Suppose evil befalls the evil-doer. I, however, think of doing evil to none. Then, how can ill affect me who do no evil deed?” This is the third solace found by him.

‘Sace kho pana karoto na karīyati pāpaṃ athāhaṃ ubhayen’eva visuddhaṃ attānaṃ samanupassāmī’ti. ayaṃassa catuttho assāso adhigato hoti.

“Suppose evil does not befall the evil-doer, Then, I see myself purified in both ways.” This is the fourth solace found by him.

‘Sa kho so bhante ariyasāvako evaṃ averacitto evaṃ abyāpajjhacitto evaṃ asaṅkiliṭṭhacitto evaṃ visuddhacitto. Tassa diṭṭh’eva dhamme ime cattāro assāsā adhigatā hontī’ti.

“The noble disciple, Venerable Sir, who has such a hate-free mind, who has such a malice-free mind, who has such undefiled mind, who has such a purified mind, is one by whom, here and now, these four solaces are found.”

“Abhikkantaṃ bhante, abhikkantaṃ bhante. Seyyathāpi, bhante, nikkujjitaṃ vā ukkujjeyya paṭicchannaṃ vā vivareyya mūḷhassa vā maggaṃ ācikkheyya andhakāre vā telapajjotaṃ dhāreyya ‘cakkhumanto rūpāni dakkhinti ti evamevaṃ bhante anekapariyāyena Dhammo pakāsito. Ete mayaṃ bhante Bhagavantaṃ saraṇam gacchāma dhammañ ca bhikkhusaṅghañ ca. upāsake no bhante Bhagavā dhāretu ajjatagge pāṇupete saraṇam gate’”ti.

“Venerable Sir, it is marvellous. Venerable sir, it is marvellous. We, venerable sir, just as a (vessel) turned upside down is turned up, or what is closed is made to open, or just as showing the way to one who has lost his way, or as one who holds an oil lamp in the dark with the thought, ‘Let those who have eyes see forms,’ in similar manner, by the venerable sir, in various, ways, the Dhamma has been declared. That I, go to the Blessed One for refuge, to the Teaching for refuge, and to the Order for refuge. Venerable sir, may the Blessed One regard us as followers who, from today to the end of life, have taken refuge.

(Aṅguttara Nikāyya – Thika Nipāta Pāli – Mahā Vaggo – Kesmutta (Kesaputta, Kālama) Sutta)

Kālāma (Kesaputta) Sutta
Explanation

The **Kālāma Sutta** is found in the **Aṅguttara Nikāya**, specifically in the **Tika Nipāta** (The Section of Threes). The **Aṅguttara Nikāya** is organized by numbers: the **Ekaka Nipāta** contains teachings explained one by one, the **Duka Nipāta** contains teachings explained in pairs, and the **Tika Nipāta** contains teachings explained in groups of three. Since the **Kālāma Sutta** is a teaching based on three points, it belongs to the **Tika Nipāta**. Within the **Aṅguttara Nikāya**, this sutta is included in the first volume, known as the **Ratana Grantha** (the Jewel Volume).

At the time when the Blessed One gave this discourse, He was traveling on a Teaching journey through the **Kosala** country. Wherever He went, kings, ministers, and wealthy supporters such as **Anāthapiṇḍika** would prepare monasteries and offer them to Him. However, the Buddha did not remain permanently in one monastery. During the rainy season retreat, He would stay in one place, observing the retreat, but after the retreat was concluded, out of compassion for gods and humans, He would travel from

village to village, town to town, spreading the Dhamma. On these journeys, He met many different kinds of people—brahmins, those holding various views, members of the warrior class, and people from many walks of life. As He encountered them along the way, He taught the Dhamma to those who were receptive. In this way, the Blessed One spent His days, dedicating His time to sharing the Teaching with the world.

At the time when the Blessed One delivered this discourse, He was traveling in the **Kosala** country. Among the sixteen great states of ancient India, **Kosala** was the largest and most powerful, ruled by the Kosalan king. During this journey, the Buddha came to a village called **Kesaputta**. This was the home of many families belonging to the **Kālāma** clan, who were of the warrior (**kṣatriya**) lineage and royal descent.

Kesaputta was an ordinary-sized village—not very large, but not small either. It was here that the Buddha gave the famous **Kālāma Sutta**. Today, this same place is known as **Kesariya** in India. At **Kesariya**, there still stands the remains of a great **stūpa** built by Emperor **Dharmāsoka**. The ruins are preserved as an archaeological site in India. In the texts, the location is referred to as

Kesaputta, but in modern times it is identified as **Kesariya**.

After the Blessed One came to the village of **Kesaputta**, news quickly spread among the people there, especially among the **Kālāma** clan of the warrior lineage. Word went around that the Ascetic Gautama, who had renounced the **Sākya** clan, had arrived in their village. This reputation spread not only within **Kesaputta** but also to the surrounding villages, and people began to speak of the Buddha's presence.

At that time in India, social status and clan identity carried great importance. Respect and honour were often shown based on lineage. Even when a Buddha arises in the world, the spread of the Dhamma is influenced by these social structures. Because of this, when the Buddha appeared, His fame and reputation naturally spread among the people, and even the gods observed the unfolding of the Dhamma in the human world.

Even when a Buddha arises in the world, the spreading of the Dhamma is something that even the Buddhas of the past, present, and future observe from the heavenly realms. The

appearance of a Buddha is not random—it is connected to the conditions of time, place, land, clan, and mother. These factors shape the circumstances in which a Buddha is born and how the Dhamma is propagated.

At that time, the Blessed One pointed out through the Dhamma that a person's worth is not determined by birth or clan, but by their actions. Whether someone is of high caste or low caste, what truly matters is their conduct. Thus, it is said: "**Kamma nā vasalo hoti – Kamma nā hoti bhāhmaṇo**: By action one becomes an outcaste; by action one becomes a brahmin."

Only those who listen to the Dhamma, reflect upon it, and understand it can truly grasp this truth—that humanity is seen through deeds, not lineage. However, ordinary people tend to judge others by clan or caste. In India, both in the Buddha's time and even today, social divisions based on caste have been deeply influential. Because of this, people often gave respect and honour according to clan status.

For example, if the Bodhisatta had been born into the lowest caste, many would not have accepted him or listened to his teaching. People would

have dismissed him, saying: “He belongs to such-and-such low caste; why should we hear the Dhamma from him?” This shows how society often degraded individuals based on caste identity. Such attitudes reveal the mindset of Indian society—placing clan and caste above the true measure of a person, which is their actions.

When the Blessed One came to the village of **Kesaputta**, the reputation that spread among the people was not due to any ordinary reason. It was because he was known as the Ascetic Gautama, who had renounced the **Sākya** clan. People marvelled that someone born into such a noble and high lineage—a royal prince with the possibility of kingship—had given up worldly power and wealth to become a renunciant.

This act of leaving behind the privileges of a royal birth and choosing the life of a wandering ascetic was regarded as the highest and most admirable deed. That is why a great wave of fame spread among the people: the news that a **Sākya** prince had renounced everything and was now living as a monk. This reputation elevated the Buddha’s presence in **Kesaputta** and beyond, inspiring respect and curiosity among the villagers and neighboring communities.

After the Blessed One came to **Kesaputta**, people began to speak not only of his renunciation but also of his extraordinary qualities.

They said: "He is an **Arahant**, free from defilements. He is a Fully Enlightened Buddha (**Sammā Sambuddha**), who realized the Dhamma without a teacher's guidance. He is endowed with perfect knowledge and conduct (**vijjā-caraṇa-sampanna**), living a virtuous and disciplined life in harmony with the realization of the Eight Knowledges and Fifteen Practices. He is the **Sugata**, who has discovered the beautiful path to **Nibbāna** and attained liberation. He is the **Lokavidū**, the Knower of the Worlds, who has complete understanding of the universe and is free from all realms of existence. He is the **Anuttaro purisa-damma-sārathi**, the supreme trainer of persons, who guides beings through miraculous powers, through instruction, and through discipline, leading them toward **Nibbāna**. He is the **Satthā deva-manussānaṃ**, the Teacher of gods and humans, the supreme master who, out of great compassion, teaches the Dhamma to the world. He is the **Buddho**, the Blessed One, **Bhagavā** fortunate and worthy, who embodies all these noble qualities."

Thus, along with the spreading of his fame, people also began to speak of the Buddha's virtues, praising his qualities and greatness.

As people continued to talk, many decided: "Let us go and meet him ourselves. If we have questions, we can ask directly." So, a large group of villagers from the surrounding areas began to gather. From the nearby villages, many of the **Kālāmas**—members of the warrior clan—came together and went to see the Blessed One.

Thus, on that day, a great crowd assembled at **Kesaputta**, eager to meet the Buddha face to face, to listen to his teaching, and to seek answers to their doubts.

In this discourse it is mentioned that when the people came to meet the Blessed One, they expressed their respect in different ways. Some approached him with great reverence, bowed, and introduced themselves, saying: "Venerable Sir, I am of such-and-such clan, I am of such-and-such family," and then sat down respectfully to converse. Others bowed deeply, then withdrew and sat quietly behind him, showing respect without speaking. Some placed their joined hands upon their foreheads, bowed with devotion, and

after paying homage, sat respectfully to one side. Still others, filled with reverence, simply bowed and sat silently without engaging in conversation. In this way, each person honoured the Buddha according to their own manner, but all with deep respect and devotion.

In this discourse it is recorded that, after the **Kālāmas** had paid homage and sat respectfully to one side, they spoke to the Blessed One:
"Venerable Sir, in our villages here in **Kesaputta**, many different teachers come, each claiming to be a true master. For example, there was **Nigaṇṭha Nāthaputta**, leader of the **Nigaṇṭhas**, who declared himself a teacher and claimed liberation. There was also **Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta**, **Ajita Kesakambala**, **Kakudha Kāccāyana**, and **Makkhali Gosāla**. Each of them had followers and proclaimed that they had realized the truth or attained liberation. Some gathered large groups of disciples, and some misled people with their doctrines.

Thus, when the Buddha appeared, the society was already filled with many sects and teachers, and numerous wrong views and speculative philosophies were widespread. These various

doctrines had attracted large numbers of followers throughout the land of India."

On that occasion, the **Kālāmas** said to the Blessed One:
"Venerable Sir, in our village of **Kesaputta**, many different teachers come. Each of them declares: 'Our doctrine alone is true; this is the correct Dhamma. All other teachings are false—do not accept them.' They each raise up their own view, insisting that only their teaching is right, while dismissing the doctrines of others as worthless or deceptive.

Thus, every teacher who arrives proclaims: 'Do not listen to the others; only we speak the truth.' In this way, each group elevates its own doctrine and rejects all the rest."

The **Kālāmas** then said to the Blessed One:
"Venerable Sir, this is why we are uncertain. All these teachers come to our village, each one claiming: 'Our doctrine alone is true. This is the correct path to liberation. We are the ones who truly understand the Dhamma.' At the same time, they criticize the others, saying: 'Their teachings are false, do not accept them.'"

Thus, each group insists that only their view is right, while dismissing all the others as wrong. Because of this, we are filled with doubt and confusion. We do not know how to distinguish what is true from what is false."

Then the Blessed One said:
"**Kālāmas**, you have spoken rightly. You have doubted where it is proper to doubt. You have raised uncertainty where uncertainty should indeed be raised. Therefore, **Kālāmas**, it is correct that you are questioning these doctrines. When different teachers come and say, 'Only our teaching is true, all others are false,' and when they dismiss the rest, it is natural for you to feel doubt. You are right to be cautious and to examine carefully what is being claimed."

From that point, the Blessed One began to show the **Kālāmas** how to discover the true Dhamma. He said:

"**Kālāmas**, do not accept something merely because you have heard it said **(mā anussavena)**. Do not accept something simply because it has been handed down through tradition **(mā paramparāya)**.

“Do not accept something merely because someone says, ‘This is how it happened.’ (**mā itikirāya)** They may say, ‘Look, this is what occurred—we saw it with our own eyes, the Buddha’s radiance shone forth, and we too were present.’ Even then, do not accept it simply on the basis of hearing, ‘This is how it was.’”

Do not accept something merely because it is spoken by authority or because it is found in scriptures. **(mā piṭakasampadānena)**.

Do not accept something simply because it is logical reasoning (**mā takkahetu**), or because it seems to fit with speculation (**mā nayahetu**). Do not accept something merely because it appears to be true **(mā ākāraparivitakkena)**, or because it is spoken by a respected teacher.”

In this way, the Buddha advised the **Kālāmas** not to rely blindly on hearsay, tradition, or authority, but to examine carefully with wisdom and discernment.

At that time, there was no written **Tipiṭaka** (Three Baskets of the Canon). The Blessed One taught the Dhamma directly to the monks. They were instructed to listen carefully, paying

attention to the teaching (**sutā**), to remember what they had heard retaining it in memory, not letting it slip away. (**dhatā**), to recite and repeat it (**vacasā paricitā**), and to practice it until it became familiar. Then, with mindfulness and wisdom (**manasānupekkhitā**), they were to examine the meaning deeply, and through thorough reflection (**Diṭṭhiyā suppaṭividdhā**), penetrating it with right view, truly understanding its meaning.

In this way, the Dhamma was preserved and developed—not through written texts, but through oral transmission, memorization, and repeated recitation. The Buddha guided monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen to safeguard the teaching by learning, chanting, and reflecting upon it. This was the living tradition of study and practice during the Buddha's lifetime.

Even after the First Council, the monks did not write down the Dhamma in books. It was preserved through memorization and oral recitation. After the Second Council, the same method continued—monks carried the teachings forward by committing them to memory. After the Third Council as well, the tradition of oral transmission was maintained.

When the great elder **Mahinda** came to Sri Lanka, he did not bring a written **Tipiṭaka**. He had memorized the Buddha's teachings and transmitted them orally. In Sri Lanka too, the monks learned the Dhamma in the same way—through recitation, memorization, and repetition.

The writing down of the Dhamma into books happened much later, during the reign of King **Vaṭṭagāmaṇi Abhaya**. It was in his time that the oral tradition was finally committed to writing, giving rise to the written **Tipiṭaka** as we know it today.

The reason the Dhamma was finally written down in Sri Lanka was during the reign of King **Vaṭṭagāmaṇi Abhaya**. At that time, a severe famine and drought lasted for twelve years. Because of this hardship, thousands of great arahants passed away, and the monks who remained struggled to preserve the teachings purely through memorization.

They realized: "If in the future an even worse famine or disaster arises, the monks who carry the Dhamma by memory may perish, and then how will the teaching be preserved for future

generations?" With this concern, they decided to record the Dhamma in written form.

Thus, five hundred great elders gathered together at **Aluvihāra** in Matale. There, they committed the oral tradition to writing on palm-leaf manuscripts. This was the first time the **Tipiṭaka** was written down, ensuring that the Buddha's Teaching would be safeguarded for the future.

Then the Blessed One said to the **Kālāmas**:
"**Kālāmas**, do not accept something merely because it is found in books or scriptures. At that time, the texts referred to were the Vedic scriptures of the Brahmins, which people regarded as ancient authority. But do not accept a teaching simply because it is written in such texts. Do not accept something merely because it agrees with logical reasoning or clever argument. The Dhamma is not to be accepted only on the basis of speculation or debate. Therefore, **Kālāmas**, do not rely solely on tradition, hearsay, or reasoning alone."

Then the Blessed One said to the **Kālāmas**:
"**Kālāmas**, do not accept something merely because it fits with reasoning or clever argument **(mā takkahetu)**. Many different views can be

made to appear correct through logic, but that does not mean they are truly right. Even in courts, arguments can be twisted—falsehoods can be made to look like truth, and truth can be made to appear false—depending on the skill of the debater.

Therefore, the Dhamma should not be accepted simply because it agrees with reasoning or dialectical analysis **(mā nayahetu)**. Do not accept something merely because it has been carefully arranged to fit a system of logic. Truth is not established by argument alone**, (mā ākāra parivitakkena)**."

The Blessed One continued:
"**Kālāmas**, do not accept something merely because it arises from your own imagination or speculation **(mā diṭṭhinijjhānakkhantiyā)**. Do not accept it simply because you have thought it through and built it up in your mind, saying: 'If this is so, then that must be so; therefore, this must be true.' Such reasoning, based only on personal reflection, is not enough. Why? Because ordinary people are not free from defilements. Their thoughts are conditioned by craving, ignorance, and bias. Only a Buddha possesses the perfect

knowledge (**sabbaññutā ñāṇa**) that sees reality as it truly is. Therefore, do not rely solely on your own speculation or mental construction to accept a teaching as true."

The Blessed One continued:
"**Kālāmas**, do not accept something merely because it agrees with your own view or opinion **(mā diṭṭhinijjhānakkhantiyā)**. Many people cling to their own beliefs, saying: 'This is my standpoint, this is my doctrine, I will hold to this view.' But do not accept a teaching simply because it fits with your personal conviction.

Do not accept something merely because it appears pleasing when seen, or because it seems attractive to the eye **(mā bhabbarūpatāya)**.

Do not accept something simply because it is spoken by a respected ascetic or teacher **(mā samaṇo no garū)**, thinking: 'This venerable one is my master, therefore whatever he says must be true.' Even if the speaker is honoured, do not accept blindly. Truth is not established by authority, appearance, or attachment to views."

The Blessed One showed the **Kālāmas** ten reasons that should not be relied upon—ten bases that are not proper grounds for accepting a doctrine. These include:

Anussava Do not accept something just because it is heard repeatedly (oral tradition).
Paramparā Do not accept something simply because it is handed down (lineage, tradition).
Itikirā Do not accept something because of hearsay or rumour.
Piṭakasampadāna Do not accept something merely because it is found in scriptures.
Takkahetu Do not accept something solely on the basis of logical reasoning.
Nayahetu Do not accept something because it accords with a method of inference.
Ākāraparivitakka Do not accept something because it seems to fit with reflection or speculation.
Diṭṭhi-nijjhānakkhanti Do not accept something because it agrees with one's own views.
Bhabba-rūpatā Do not accept something because the speaker appears competent or authoritative.
Samaṇo no garū Do not accept something merely out of respect for a teacher.

The Buddha said: “Do not accept the Dhamma on such grounds.”

The most important part is what follows—the true criterion for acceptance:

• **“Kālāmas**, when you yourselves know: **ime dhammā akusalā** ‘These things are unwholesome, **ime dhammā sāvajjā** harmful, and **ime dhammā viññugarahitā** condemned by the wise; **ime dhammā samattā samādinnā ahitāya dukkhāya saṁvattantī’ti** when practiced they lead to suffering’— **atha tumhe, kālāmā, pajaheyyātha** then **Kālāma** you should abandon them.”

“The Blessed One said: ‘**Kālāmas**, what is unwholesome, what is wrong? If something is censured by the wise and the prudent, and if, when practiced, it leads to much harm and suffering, then, **Kālāmas**, you should abandon it.’”

• “On the other hand, when you yourselves know: ‘These things are wholesome, beneficial, and praised by the wise; when practiced they lead to happiness and welfare’—then you should accept them and live by them.”

The Blessed One said to the **Kālāmas**:
"**Kālāmas**, when you know for yourselves: 'This is unwholesome, this is wrong, this is criticized by the wise; if practiced, it leads to harm and suffering for a long time'—then, **Kālāmas**, you should abandon it."

Thus, the Buddha showed the **Kālāmas** what must be given up. He clearly pointed out the things that are unwholesome, condemned by the wise, and lead to suffering, and instructed them to let go of such practices.

Ethical Inquiry into Greed (lobha)

From there the Blessed One explained further:
"**Kālāmas**, what do you think? Is greed (**lobha**) for the welfare of people, or is it for their harm?"
The **Kālāmas** replied: "Venerable Sir, greed is for harm; it is not for welfare."

The Blessed One said: "**Kālāmas**, when a person's mind is overcome by greed—when it is dominated and misled by craving—that person brings harm and suffering to many. Such a mind leads to killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, and the use of intoxicants. Not only that, such a

person encourages others to engage in these unwholesome actions as well.

Thus it is clear that greed is a root cause that drives people into the five kinds of misconduct (**pañca duccarita**)."

Now see, greed (**lobha**) means strong craving, attachment, and desire that misleads the mind. Because of greed, some commit killing. Out of desire, some are driven to take life. Out of attachment to power, fame, or reputation, some are moved to destroy their opponents.

Greed can also lead people to kill animals for meat or fish, or to slaughter creatures at home for food. You may have heard such stories. In the **Jātaka** tales, it is even recorded that a king, intoxicated with liquor, strangled his own child and ate the flesh.

Thus, greed is shown to be a root cause that drives people into acts of killing and other misconduct. Thus, we can see: because of greed, people commit killing.

Because of greed, people steal. Desire drives theft—from small petty stealing up to great large-

scale robberies. No matter how much some people gain, they are never satisfied. Greed makes them think: “I have gained one million, now I want ten million.” They break into one bank, then plan to break into another.

In the same way, greed fuels corrupt trades such as narcotics and harmful businesses that bring destruction to society. All these wrong actions—robbery, fraud, exploitation—are carried out because of greed.

Next, people fall into sexual misconduct because of defilements. Driven by craving, they wander from place to place, seeking opportunities and persons to indulge in.

Then comes lying: because of greed, people tell lies. They lie to gain fame, wealth, or advantage. Through falsehood they deceive others, mislead them, and exploit them. Out of greed, they pretend to be something they are not, tricking people with lies.

Likewise, because of greed, people are drawn into intoxicants—alcohol and drugs. Once addicted, greed fuels the craving further. They search for more, waste their possessions, fall into debt, and

are dragged deeper into corruption. Some even drink themselves into a ghost-like state (**peta**), losing all dignity.

Thus, greed leads people into misconduct: sexual immorality, lying, intoxication, and even encouraging others to do the same. This is how greed misguides human beings.

Ethical Inquiry into Hatred (Dvesha)

Next, the Blessed One asked the **Kālāmas**:
"**Kālāmas**, what do you think? Is hatred (**dvesha**) for the welfare of people, or is it for their harm?"
The **Kālāmas** replied: "Venerable Sir, hatred is for harm; it is not for welfare."

The Blessed One said: "**Kālāmas**, when a person's mind is overcome by hatred—when it is dominated and misled by anger—that person, acting with such a mind, engages in killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, and the use of intoxicants. Moreover, such a person encourages others to join in these unwholesome actions as well."

Now we can see: just as greed leads people into the five kinds of misconduct (**pañca duccarita**),

so too does hatred. Some commit killing because of hatred—driven by vengeance, they murder and commit crimes. Hatred motivates people to destroy life.

Next, stealing: hatred can also drive theft, with the intention of depriving others of their possessions, thinking, “They should not enjoy these things.” Out of spite and revenge, one may steal to cause harm.

Then, family life is destroyed: some engage in sexual misconduct out of hatred, seeking to ruin another’s household. Out of revenge, they commit adultery or assault, sometimes even publicizing it to disgrace the victim. In extreme cases, hatred leads to abuse and even murder, all as acts of vengeance.

Thus, when a mind is overcome by hatred, a person falls into the five kinds of misconduct, just as with greed.

Next, lying also arises from hatred. Out of anger, people tell lies to harm others. They may say, “I saw this with my own eyes,” though they did not see it at all. Some give false testimony, accusing others and handing them over to the police. In

court, they lie, and through such falsehoods they cause others to suffer.

Thus, with a mind overcome by hatred, people deceive, slander, and destroy others. When consumed by anger, some even turn to intoxicants, drinking out of spite. In this way, because of hatred, people fall into the five kinds of misconduct (**pañca duccarita**). Not only that, they also incite others to join in these unwholesome actions.

Ethical Reflection on Delusion (**moha**)

Next, the Blessed One asked the **Kālāmas**: "**Kālāmas**, what do you think? Is delusion (**moha**) for the welfare of people, or is it for their harm?" The **Kālāmas** replied: "Venerable Sir, delusion is only for harm; it brings suffering to people."

The Blessed One said: "**Kālāmas**, delusion means lack of understanding, ignorance, confusion. It is the absence of right view regarding the Dhamma, this world and the next. Because of delusion, people are misled. With a mind overcome by delusion, they commit killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, and the use of intoxicants."

Now see: because of lust (**rāga**), hatred (**dvesha**), and delusion (**moha**), people commit these wrong actions. Some kill because of lust, some because of hatred, and some because of delusion.

Through delusion, people think: "Killing is not a sin; it is done by the will of the gods." Misled by such false views, they believe that killing humans or animals is not unwholesome. With a mind overcome by delusion, they commit killing, thinking it is justified.

Likewise, because of delusion, people steal. They argue: "Taking from here is not a sin. Just as taking a little water from the ocean does not empty the sea, so taking a little from others is no problem." With such distorted reasoning, even great people justify theft, believing it is not wrong. In the same way, delusion leads people into intoxicants. They think: "A little alcohol is harmless. Doctors even prescribe it. It is good for the body." Misled by such beliefs, they indulge in drinking and drugs, blinded by delusion.

So, we can see: some commit the five kinds of misconduct (**pañca duccarita**) because of greed, some because of hatred, and some because of delusion.

The Blessed One said to the **Kālāmas**:
"**Kālāmas**, when these five wrong actions are rooted in greed, hatred, and delusion—are these qualities wholesome or unwholesome? Are they right or wrong?"

The **Kālāmas** replied: "Venerable Sir, they are unwholesome. These things are indeed unwholesome. They are wrong. They are criticized by the wise, condemned by the intelligent. They are harmful, they lead to suffering, and they bring misfortune to many."

Therefore, **Kālāmas**, when such things are practiced, they should be abandoned.

The Buddha's Closing Counsel on Discernment

The Blessed One said again to the **Kālāmas**:

"**Kālāmas**, do not accept something merely because you have heard it said. Do not accept it merely because it has been handed down by tradition. Do not accept it merely because it is found in scriptures. Do not accept it merely because it accords with reasoning or logic. Do not accept it merely because it fits with your own

view. Do not accept it merely because it appears pleasing. Do not accept it merely because it is spoken by a respected ascetic or teacher."

But, **Kālāmas**, when you yourselves know: 'These things are wholesome, these things are right, these things are praised by the wise, these things when practiced lead to welfare and happiness for a long time'—then, **Kālāmas**, you should accept and practice them."

Ethical Inquiry into non-greed (alobha)

Then the Blessed One reminded the **Kālāmas** again, this time from the wholesome side:
"**Kālāmas**, what do you think? Is non-greed (**alobha**) for the welfare of people, or for their harm?"

The **Kālāmas** replied: "Venerable Sir, non-greed is for welfare; it benefits people."

The Blessed One said: "**Kālāmas**, when a person's mind is free from greed—when it is guided by non-attachment and contentment—that person does not commit killing. He does not steal. He does not engage in sexual misconduct. He does not lie. He does not indulge in intoxicants.

Thus, rooted in non-greed, one does not fall into the five kinds of misconduct (**pañca duccarita**)."

Ethical Inquiry into non-hatred (advesha)

Next, the Blessed One asked the **Kālāmas**:
"**Kālāmas**, what do you think? Is non-hatred (**advesha**), that is loving-kindness (**mettā**), for the welfare of people or for their harm?"
The **Kālāmas** replied: "Venerable Sir, loving-kindness is only for welfare; it brings happiness."

The Blessed One said: "**Kālāmas**, when a person is free from hatred, when he has developed loving-kindness, then from such a person killing does not arise. He does not steal. He does not engage in sexual misconduct. He does not lie. He does not indulge in intoxicants or act for the harm of others. Such things do not occur in one whose mind is rooted in loving-kindness."

Now see, when one keeps the precepts, the Blessed One shows how it is done.

By making oneself the measure (**attānaṃ upamaṃ katvā**), a person endowed with loving-kindness refrains from killing. He thinks:

“Would I wish anyone to come with weapons, to cut me, strike me, and kill me? No, I would not. In the same way, all beings love their lives and are attached to them. Every creature cherishes life and dislikes death. Therefore, I will not harm or take the life of any being with my body or my actions.” Thus, one with loving-kindness refrains from killing.

Next, he reflects: “Would I wish anyone to steal my possessions—my gold, my goods, my wealth? Would I not suffer greatly if someone took them?” In the same way, all beings are attached to their possessions. Therefore, I will never steal from others.” Thus, one with loving-kindness refrains from stealing.

He reflects further:
“If I am living a family life, would I wish another person to intrude, destroy my household, and cause conflict? No, I would not. Therefore, I must never approach another’s wife if I am a man, nor another’s husband if I am a woman, and I must not disturb another’s family. Thus, one with loving-kindness refrains from sexual misconduct.”

He thinks again: “Would I wish anyone to deceive me with lies, to mislead me, to cheat me? No, I

would not. Therefore, I must never deceive others with falsehood."

He reflects further: "Would I wish anyone, drunk with liquor or drugs, to shout at me, insult me, or abuse me? No, I would not. In the same way, I must not intoxicate myself, lose mindfulness, and commit wrong actions that harm my family or others. Therefore, I refrain from intoxicants, and I encourage others to refrain as well."

Thus, through non-greed (**alobha**), non-hatred (**advesha**), loving-kindness, and non-delusion (**amoha**), one keeps the precepts and cultivates virtue. Just as greed, hatred, and delusion lead to the five kinds of misconduct, so too non-greed, non-hatred, and non-delusion lead a person toward moral conduct and wholesome qualities.

Ethical Inquiry into Non-Delusion (amoha)

Next, the Blessed One asked the **Kālāmas**:
"**Kālāmas**, what do you think? Is non-delusion (**amoha**) for the welfare of people, or for their harm?"
The Kālāmas replied: "Venerable Sir, non-delusion is for welfare; it brings benefit and happiness."

The Blessed One said: "**Kālāmas**, non-delusion means freedom from ignorance. It is the arising of knowledge, understanding, wisdom, and insight. When delusion is removed, wisdom shines forth. A person who has dispelled delusion knows clearly what is wholesome and unwholesome, what is meritorious and demeritorious, what is good and bad, and the results of actions. Such a person understands that killing is unwholesome."

He understands: "Killing is unwholesome. If I commit such an act, its result will return to me. Whatever action I perform—whether good or bad—I must inherit its consequences. Therefore, killing is an unwholesome deed."

Thus, a person endowed with wisdom, free from delusion (**amoha**), refrains from killing.

He knows: "Stealing is unwholesome. If I steal, its result will return to me." He believes in the law of karma and its fruits. Having attained right view (**sammā diṭṭhi**), he refrains from stealing.

He refrains from sexual misconduct, knowing it is unwholesome. He refrains from lying, knowing that deceiving others is unwholesome. No one can

mislead him by saying, “This is not a sin, do it.” Because he abides in understanding, having dispelled delusion, with wisdom and insight arisen, he is established in right view.

Therefore, he refrains from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, and intoxicants. Not only that, he also encourages others to refrain from these wrong actions.

Then the Blessed One asked the **Kālāmas**:
“**Kālāmas**, what do you think? Are non-greed (**alobha**), non-hatred (**advesha**), loving-kindness, and non-delusion (**amoha**), wisdom for the welfare of people or for their harm?”

The **Kālāmas** replied: “Venerable Sir, these are for welfare; they bring benefit and happiness.”

The Blessed One said: “**Kālāmas**, these qualities are wholesome. They are right. They are good Dhammas. Such qualities are praised by the wise, not criticized. They are commended by the intelligent. They lead to welfare and happiness for many.”

Then the Blessed One said again to the **Kālāmas**:

"**Kālāmas**, when people come to your village and say, 'This is right, this is true, you must accept this,' do not accept it merely because you have heard it said.

Do not accept it merely because it has been handed down by tradition, saying, 'Our ancestors, our brahmins, held this view, therefore we must continue it.'

Do not accept it merely because it is spoken with authority, or because it is found in scriptures and books. Even if someone shows you texts, turns pages, or presents new writings, saying, 'See, it is written here,' do not accept it on that basis alone."

"One may argue again and again, reasoning and debating, trying to prove that something fits with logic. Yet do not accept it merely because it seems to fit with logic.

One may say it accords with a principle, and that it has been drawn into alignment with that principle. Yet do not accept it merely because of that.

One may imagine and construct knowledge through one's own thought and speculation. Yet

do not accept it merely because it seems to fit with such imagination.

One may cling to a view, thinking 'this is my view, this is my knowledge.' Yet do not accept it merely because of that attachment.

One may see a teacher, respected, and honoured, and think, 'this is our venerable master, we hold him in reverence.' Yet do not accept it merely because he has said so."

"**Therefore, Kālāmas, when you know for yourselves: 'These qualities are wholesome; these qualities are blameless; these qualities are not criticized by the wise but are praised by the wise; when practiced and cultivated, these qualities bring long-lasting welfare and happiness, they benefit many, both in this world and in the next'—then, Kālāmas, you should practice and live by them.**"

Then the Blessed One explained further to the **Kālāmas**:
"**Kālāmas**, the noble disciple (**ariya-sāvaka**)—that is, one who has gone for refuge to the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha—is called an **ariya-sāvaka**.

Such a noble disciple, established in refuge, is guided by non-greed (**alobha**), non-hatred (**advesha**), and non-delusion (**amoha**). He does not act with a mind overcome by greed. He does not make decisions with a mind dominated by hatred. He does not make choices with a mind clouded by delusion. Instead, his thoughts and actions are rooted in clarity, compassion, and wisdom."

Then the Blessed One explained further to the **Kālāmas**:
"**Kālāmas**, the noble disciple (**ārya-sāvaka**)—having gone for refuge to the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha—lives free from ill-will. He removes hatred and cultivates loving-kindness. With a mind filled with loving-kindness, he radiates it in all ten directions. He spreads compassion in all ten directions. He spreads sympathetic joy in all ten directions. He spreads equanimity in all ten directions.

Thus, abiding with a mind of loving-kindness (**Mettā**), compassion (**karuṇā**), sympathetic joy (**Muditā**), and equanimity (**Upekkhā**)—the four **brahma vihāras**—he refrains from the five kinds of misconduct, and dwells extending loving-kindness to all beings everywhere."

The Blessed One said: "**Kālāmas**, in this way, the noble disciple, not acting under greed, hatred, or delusion, but guided by non-greed, non-hatred, and non-delusion, lives cultivating loving-kindness in all directions.

For such a noble disciple, four assurances (**assāsa**) arise in this very life. Because of these, he experiences extraordinary happiness."

The Four Assurances of the Noble Disciple

Then the Blessed One explained further to the **Kālāmas**:
"**Kālāmas**, if there truly is a next world, then the noble disciple who lives with loving-kindness gains this first assurance.

He reflects: 'If there is another life after death, then because I live without harming anyone, because I dwell with loving-kindness extended in all directions, because I refrain from the five kinds of misconduct, I will be reborn in a good destination, a happy realm.'

Thus, he gains the first assurance: confidence and joy regarding the next world. Looking at his own

life, he feels great happiness, thinking, 'I am one who refrains from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, and intoxicants. I live with loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity. Therefore, if there is a next world, I am surely bound for a good rebirth.'

This is the first assurance that brings him extraordinary happiness."

Then the Blessed One said:
"**Kālāmas**, there is a second assurance for the noble disciple. Whatever may be said about the next world, in this very life he gains assurance.

He reflects: 'Here and now, I live happily, free from suffering. Because I refrain from the five kinds of misconduct, I am not burdened by fear. Those who kill live in fear—wondering when they will be caught, when the law will punish them, when false witnesses will arise against them. Thieves live in fear, always anxious that their crimes will be exposed. Those who commit wrong actions cannot live with confidence among people; they tremble, thinking their faults will be revealed.'

But the noble disciple, established in virtue, guided by non-greed, non-hatred, and non-delusion, living with loving-kindness extended in all directions, gains assurance in this life. He reflects: 'I live joyfully. I do not harm others. I am praised by the wise. Therefore, I live happily here and now.'

This is the second assurance: happiness and freedom from fear in this very life."

Then the Blessed One said:
"**Kālāmas**, there is a third assurance for the noble disciple. In this very life, if there are people who condemn wrongdoers, saying, 'This one is sinful, this one is corrupt,' then I am not among them.

Consider: those who engage in the five kinds of misconduct suffer immediate consequences. First, they lose their wealth and prosperity. Second, they fall into great disgrace in society. People call them murderers, thieves, adulterers, liars, drunkards. They are despised and condemned as sinful.

But I am not one of them. I am not condemned as a wrongdoer. I am not among the sinful. Therefore, in this very life, I gain the third

assurance: confidence and joy, knowing that I am free from blame and reproach."
Then the Blessed One said:
"**Kālāmas**, there is yet a fourth assurance for the noble disciple. In this world, if the wise and intelligent praise those who live righteously, saying, 'This person is virtuous, this person is meritorious, this person is full of good qualities,' then I too am among them.

I am one who lives with merit. I am one who belongs to the company of the virtuous. Therefore, I gain the fourth assurance: confidence and joy, knowing that I am praised by the wise and counted among the meritorious."

Then the Blessed One, having explained these four assurances, was praised by the **Kālāmas**.

The **Kālāmas** said:
"Venerable Sir, this discourse of yours is marvellous. Venerable Sir, We, just as a (vessel) turned upside down is turned up, or like opening what was closed, like bringing light to one who was in darkness, like showing the way to one who was lost. You have revealed the truth to us.
From this moment onward, we become disciples of the Blessed One. We go for refuge to the

Buddha, to the Dhamma taught by the Blessed One, and to the Sangha of noble disciples. May the Blessed One accept us as lay followers—**upāsakas** and **upāsikās**—who have gone for refuge for life."

Thus, the **Kālāmas** went for refuge to the Triple Gem. And that was the conclusion of the discourse.

Structured Summary of the Kālāma Sutta

*1. **Context**: The **Kālāmas** are confused by conflicting teachings.*
*2. **Buddha's Guidance**: Do not accept teachings blindly—by hearsay, tradition, scripture, or authority.*
*3. **Examination**: Test whether actions are wholesome or unwholesome, praised or blamed, leading to welfare or harm.*
*4. **Roots of Misconduct**: Greed, hatred, and delusion → five kinds of misconduct → suffering.*
*5. **Roots of Virtue**: Non-greed, loving-kindness, wisdom → virtue, happiness, and praise.*
*6. **Four Assurances**:*
- *If there is a next world → happy rebirth.*
- *If there is no next world → happiness here and now.*
- *If wrongdoers are condemned → not among them.*
- *If the virtuous are praised → among them.*

*7. **Conclusion**: The Kālāmas rejoice, declare refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, and become disciples.*

Books by Ven. Weragoda Sarada Nayaka Maha Thero

- Treasury of Truth Illustrated Dhammapada (English, Chinese & Sinhala)
- Life of the Buddha in Pictures
- Parents & Children - Key to Happiness (English & Sinhala)
- Maha Satipatthana Sutta (English, Chinese & Sinhala)
- Maha Mangala Sutta
- Nature of Life & Death (English & Sinhala)
- Life of the Buddha in Gandhara Arts (English & Sinhala)
- Life of the Buddha for Children
- Morals of the Young (English, Chinese & Sinhala)
- Buddha & His Teaching (Sinhala)
- Reflection of Death
- Doctrinal & Cultural Expects of Buddhism
- The Great Book of Protective Blessings

On-Line Projects

Access to books and Pali chanting audio collections compilated by Ven. Weragoda Sarada Nayaka Maha Thero can be accessed via

Books and Audio Access via Internet Archive:
https://archive.org/details/@ven_weragoda_sarada

Video Clips & Selected Chanting via YouTube Channel
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3qCmfeXF7ZAe_Tbjk6mLgg

THE SINGAPORE BUDDHIST MEDITATION CENTRE
No. 1, Jalan Mas Puteh, Singapore 128607
Tel: + 65 67783330, +65 94656570
weragodas1941@gmail.com